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THE RAGTIMER

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DEDICATED TO THE
PRESERVATION OF
CLASSICAL RAGTIME

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RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

FOUNDED 1962
INCORPORATED 1970

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

is a non-profit corporation having the following objects;

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1982

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Editor - Jack Hutton

Happy anniversary! With this issue, the Ragtime Society officially steps into its 20th year -- an unbelievable milestone when one considers the odds against such a widely scattered group surviving the problems of maintaining interest and contact over two decades.

The fact that we're strictly an organization of enthusiastic volunteers has made the odds even higher against the Ragtime Society surviving. But survive we have.

During those 20 years, we witnessed a re-birth of interest in classical ragtime. Suddenly, we were no longer eccentrics on the fringe of both jazz and classical music. Ragtime became a respectable musical form in terms of its appearance on many classical programs, its use in an unbelievable spectrum of performances and its acceptance by many thousands who had no idea it existed.

In the remaining Ragtimer issues during 1982, we hope to remind you of some of the highlights of those two decades, and to re-introduce you to some of the people who have sustained ragtime during that time.

In the meantime, we hope you're already planning to attend the highlight of our anniversary year: the Ragtime Bash at Toronto's Cara Inn on October 22-23-24. You won't want to miss it!

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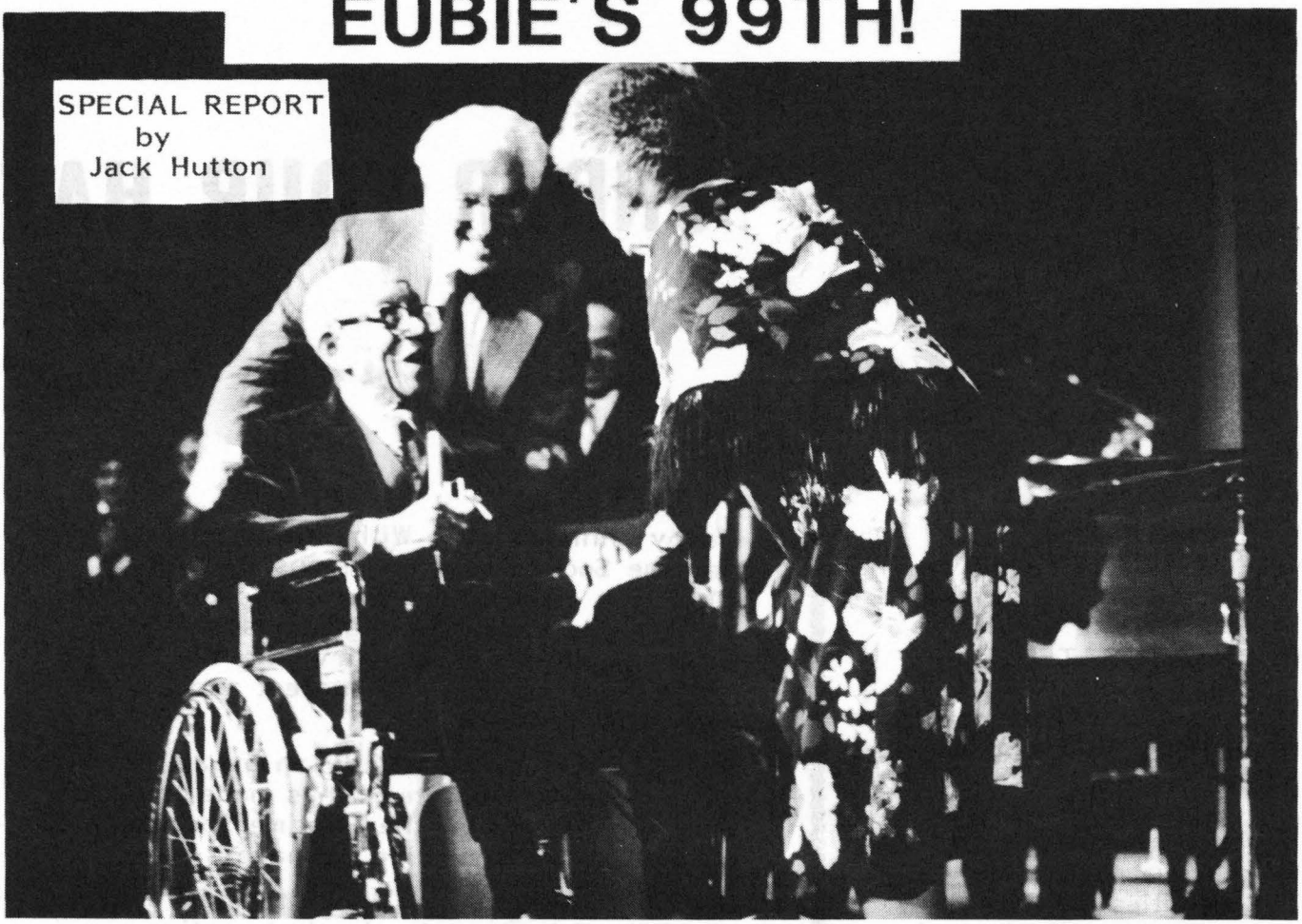
EUBIE'S 99TH!

SPECIAL REPORT
by
Jack Hutton



James Hubert Blake -- our Eubie -- is now in his 100th year! There were many messages of good wishes to coincide with the Feb. 7th birthday date and a social schedule that would have exhausted a man one-third Eubie's age. But I doubt that any of the celebrations could have topped an evening that took place Sunday, Jan. 31, in Rochester's Eastman Theatre.

Adelaide Hall, who made her Broadway debut in Shuffle Along in 1921, flew in from England to perform. Bill Bolcom and Joan Morris presented a mini-concert of Eubie's show music. The Amherst Saxaphone Quartet conquered the audience with a blend of musicianship and humour. The Copasetics, three veteran tap-dancers from the era of Bill (Bojangles) Robinson, brought the house down while proving that the geriatric set is alive and well.

But the man who stole the show was the man from Brooklyn who insisted upon walking onto the stage without the aid of a wheelchair, and who played Memories of You in a style that any blindfolded listener would recognize immediately as authentic Eubie Blake.

"I'm a happy man tonight," said Eubie in a voice which is now a raspy whisper but still full of vitality. "I heard all of you playing my music tonight, and that means something when you remember that a black musician didn't hear much of that years ago. I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

The evening was officially hosted by the Eastman School of Music and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, but credit for almost everything else should go to Robert Kimball, New York author, editor, historian, musical archeologist and a host of other talents. He not only organized the evening but acted as narrator, wrote the program notes and did everything but sell tickets at the front door. On top of that, he handled the entire evening with a class that avoided the maudlin while striking an informal family-like atmosphere.

Stephen Rosenthal of the Amherst Saxaphone Quartet and Bill Bolcom escorted Marion Blake onto the stage after Eubie (at the right) insisted that his wife share the evening and his honours.

First on the program were the Amherst Saxophone Quartet (reviewed by Tex Wyndham in the last Ragtimer). The four, Salvatore Andolina, soprano, Michael Nascimben, alto, Stephen Rosenthal, tenor, and Harry Fackelman, baritone, sound even better in person than on record, combining top-drawer musicianship (three out of the four have performed with the Buffalo Philharmonic) with a genuine ragtime feeling. Among their tunes were Poor Katie Redd, Tricky Fingers, Valse Marion, Randi's Rag, Jessamine Lane and Dictys on Seventh Avenue.

The four had a priceless story to tell about Eubie's arrival the previous afternoon at the Rochester airport, when they were on hand to play him off the aircraft. Eubie met Salvatore's girlfriend, Anna Marie Marimaccil, an attractive girl in her early 20's, and said, "Hey, that's a nice name!" He began to whistle, then asked for pen and paper. Someone drew lines on hotel stationery; Eubie scribbled rapidly and within 10 minutes handed Anna Marie a ragtime waltz named in her honour and signed by himself. I filed a story about that to The Toronto Star which headlined the article "Eubie Blake is a Ragtime Miracle at 99!" For once, a headline was absolutely accurate.

Frank Owens, whom I last saw playing piano in Broadway's Ain't Misbehavin' and who is now in Sophisticated Lady a few blocks north, was on hand with a trio and proved why his peers voted him the most valuable keyboard player in 1979. Even Frank, however, was nervous when he came to play Eubie's Charleston Rag and confessed that to the audience. "How many people can play it with that tremendous drive Eubie had on his recording?" he asked. Very few.

Bill Bolcom played a tune which he found one day in Eubie's basement and which, to my knowledge, he is the only person to have recorded. Capricious Harlem, he told me later, may be published shortly by a New York publisher. If so, I predict a small line-up eager to perform it at the following Ragtime Bash because its chords and a special feeling make it one of Eubie's best, in my humble opinion.

Continued on next page

The President of the United States of America

Awards this

Presidential Medal of Freedom

to

James H. Eubie Blake

Last of the great ragtime composers and pianists, the son of slaves, and a pioneer crusader for Black Americans in the world of arts and entertainment, Eubie Blake is a national treasure. As pianist, showman and, above all, as composer, he has added immeasurably to America's musical heritage and helped to clear the way for succeeding generations of talented artists who, but for his example, might have been denied access to the artistic mainstream.

Ronald Reagan

The White House
Washington, D. C., October 9, 1981

It was the first time I had ever seen Bolcom and his wife perform, and I understood immediately why they have such an international reputation for re-creating early American musical theatre. They performed Goodnight Angeline (am I the only person who immediately wants to harmonize to that song), I'm Craving That Kind of Love, Somebody Else, My Handyman Ain't Handy No More, Weary and Hit The Road.

If Eubie was the first star of the evening, there was no doubt who came second. Adelaide Hall, who has been seen rarely on this continent since settling in England in 1938 (she recorded there on some of Fats Waller's last recordings), stepped onto the stage and drew an immediate and prolonged standing ovation. Dressed entirely in white with a white fur around her neck, Adelaide Hall had about her that something which one recognizes immediately as stage presence but which one can never define adequately later on. When she began to sing, it must have shocked those in the audience who could remember her introducing every one of her songs: I Must Have That Man, Diga Diga Doo and I Can't Give You Anything But Love were in Blackbirds of 1928; Ill Wind was introduced by Adelaide Hall at the Cotton Club where she helped to introduce a young pianist from Cleveland called Art Tatum. If I were to tell you that she took the entire audience into her arms when she sang I Can't Give You Anything But Love and that they loved her back, that is a brief but inadequate way of describing the magic that this apparently ageless performer inspires in a performance.

For me, it was both a pleasure and an honour to represent the Ragtime Society at the advance birthday party (we were invited to sample a huge birthday cake wheeled onto the stage just before the concert ended) and to meet many people who were anxious to learn how they could join the Society and when the next Ragtime Bash will be held. Don't be surprised, for example, if the Amherst Saxophone Quartet appears.

But the greatest thrill was passing along the best wishes of all of you to Eubie who reminisced at length about other musicians during dinner and the next morning at breakfast. Despite failing hearing and his voice, he was in fine form.

"Have you got perfect pitch?" he asked me abruptly. I shook my head.

"Well, what key do you think I played Memories of You in tonight?"

"E flat. Didn't you write it in that key originally?"

"I played it in D flat. My fingers just hit D flat, so that's what I played it in. I've been doing it all my life -- playing a tune in whatever key my fingers happen to hit -- and that's how come I happened to write Charleston Rag in D flat which everyone since has said was too hard a key for the average piano player.

"It may seem funny to somebody else, but I think I'm too old to stop now."

Notes from the Rochester trip: the City of Rochester has memories for Eubie because Shuffle Along played there in the spring of 1923 and Chocolate Dandies (Dixie Moon and Jassamine Lane) premiered there the following year ... but a white-haired lady who sought him out after the concert reminded him that times were different then: Eubie stayed with her family because no hotel would accept Negroes.

FOOTNOTE: Neither Eubie nor Marion Blake had yet seen the photograph of Eubie and President Ronald Reagan which appeared in the last issue of the Ragtimer. We promptly sent them the 8 by 10 colour photograph which the White House had supplied us, and hope that it is now suitably framed in the Blake home as evidence of the Ragtime Society's affection and best wishes.

Adelaide Hall and Joan Morris combined talents in the finale of the Rochester tribute to Eubie. When Adelaide Hall sang, says Jack Hutton, it was as if she reached out and took the whole room into her arms.

They're just wild about Eubie Blake

By DAVE STEARNS
Times-Union music critic

Perhaps the best party of the weekend was anywhere within 10 feet of composer-pianist Eubie Blake.

When the author of such songs as *Memories of You* and *Wild About Harry* arrived in Rochester Saturday afternoon, a few days shy of his 99th birthday, he was greeted at the airport with a four-saxophone salute, courtesy of the Amherst (N.Y.) Saxophone Quartet.

That night, he stayed at a reception at the Memorial Art Gallery almost until midnight. Last night, he was greeted with a large birthday cake on the stage of the Eastman Theater at the conclusion of the *Eubie Blake Celebration Concert*, in which musician friends, old and new, paid tribute to him by performing an evening of his music. The concert was the climax of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra-Eastman School of Music-sponsored Festival of American Music.

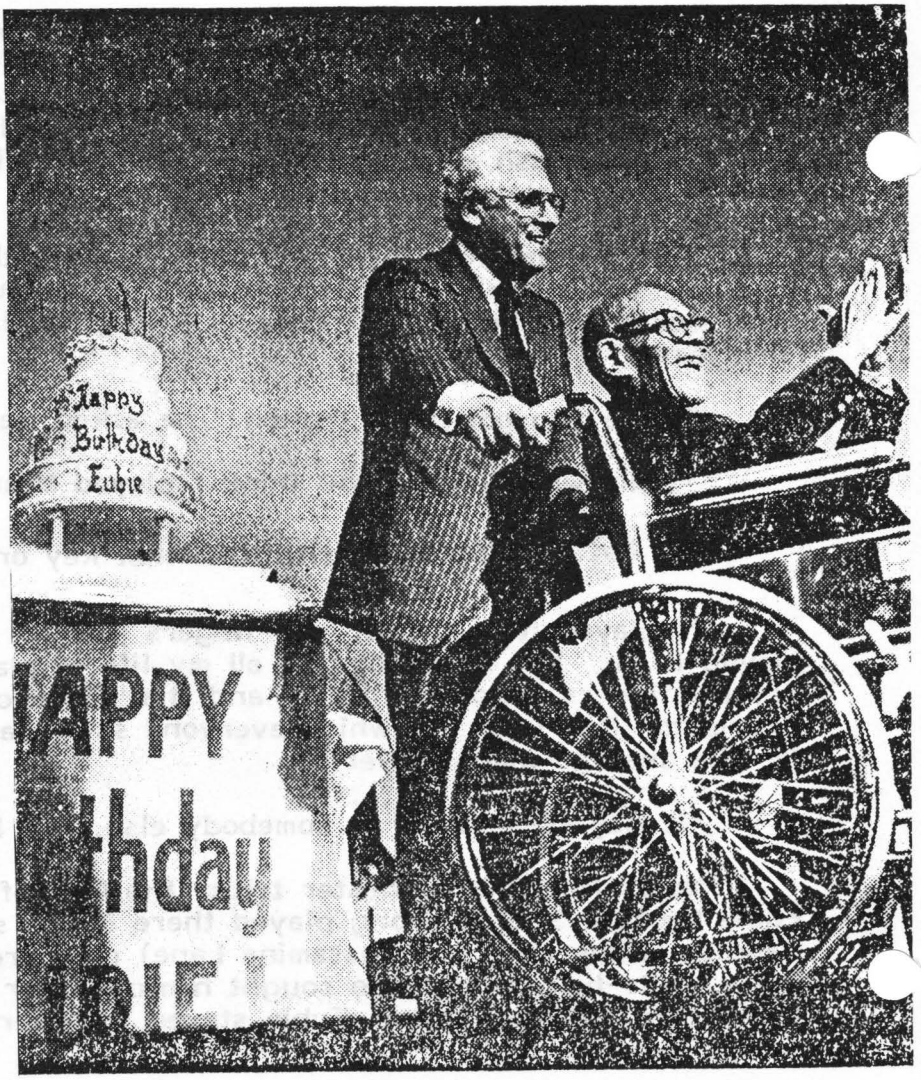
Eubie's was a nutty, spontaneous weekend in which you never knew what would happen next. With musicians driving and jetting into Rochester from various parts of the country, nobody was sure who was performing what until hours before the concert. And nobody knew when Blake would come out with one of his wry one-liners or when he would become distracted by a tune churning in his head.

This weekend, he had two melodic ideas for compositions, titled *Anne Marie* and *Ginna Glow*, to add to the notebooks full of seven- or eight-bar tunes — enough tunes, he says, to write nine or 10 shows.

Yet everything turned out just fine, with the concert concluding with a protracted standing ovation at the theater (from a surprisingly small audience of 1,200) — not just because Blake has given us great songs or survived so long, but because he projects an affirmative, direct personality, and gawd, can he play piano.

There's no mistaking, though, that age encumbers Blake. In this visit to Rochester (the city where he

Please turn to page 12C



Eubie at Rochester's Eastman Theatre with long-time friend Lou Jacobs

From page 1C

premiered his *Chocolate Dandies* show in 1924), he made the rounds with his slightly younger wife, Marion, in the wheelchair that awaited him as he made a slow, painful descent from the steps of his Empire Airlines flight from New York.

He appeared exhausted though elated once in the gate, where the saxophone quartet played Blake's infectious *Dicty's on Seventh Avenue* (1942) and some teen-age girls from a tour group about to leave Rochester performed a Rockettes-style kick dance to the music. TV cameras, lights and dozens of news media persons added to the high-spirited chaos around the entertainer who will be 99 next Sunday.

BLAKE'S OLD FRIEND, the regal English cabaret star Adelaide Hall, who had her start in Blake's first Broadway show, *Shuffle Along* (1921), greeted him with a hug and dewy eyes. Many other people were in tears, too. Blake could only reply to Miss Hall, "Oh my darling, my darling!"

"But you watch him," said Louis Jacob, Blake's longtime friend and companion from New York. "You'll see him gaining strength throughout the weekend. He'll get stronger."

Indeed, he did. During the press conference shortly after his arrival, he looked natty and composed with his frail, 112-pound frame in a three-piece suit and his ever-present cigarette (Pall Malls — unfiltered). He seemed to feed off the energy being directed at him by various interviewers.

He doesn't hear so well, and Mrs. Blake shouted the questions into her husband's ear and got a little crotchety when he still failed to understand.

What's his favorite composition? "*Love Will Find a Way*," he answered in a raspy whisper. "(*I'm Just Wild About) Harry* is *not* my favorite. I just wrote the tune and didn't think it would do much."

How does he like to hear his compositions performed? "Don't add anything to my music," he replied, finding his voice amid the rasp and bugging his eyes behind his thick glasses. "My style is different, you know? Different. People want to change it, and I don't want them to. They don't change Victor Herbert's music. And I'm as big as Victor Herbert!"

"SOMETIMES," Miss Hall said in a private aside, "you see him just sitting in a chair (backstage) and then somebody calls his name, he hears the audience, and he stands straight up, just like he has wires attached to him, and walks onstage."

And when Blake made his entrance last night at the Eastman Theater, he managed it — slowly — without a wheelchair. Sitting down at the piano, he shed four decades. During his rhapsodic, five-minute rendition of *Memories of You* (his only solo performance of the evening), he bathed the melody in a startlingly imaginative blend of elaborate, technically demanding Rachmaninoff-style ornamentation and boogie rhythms. Without qualifications, his pedaling and his sense of touch, color and execution were fluid and superb.

RAGTIME BASH

WHEN?

THE WEEKEND OF OCTOBER

22-23-24

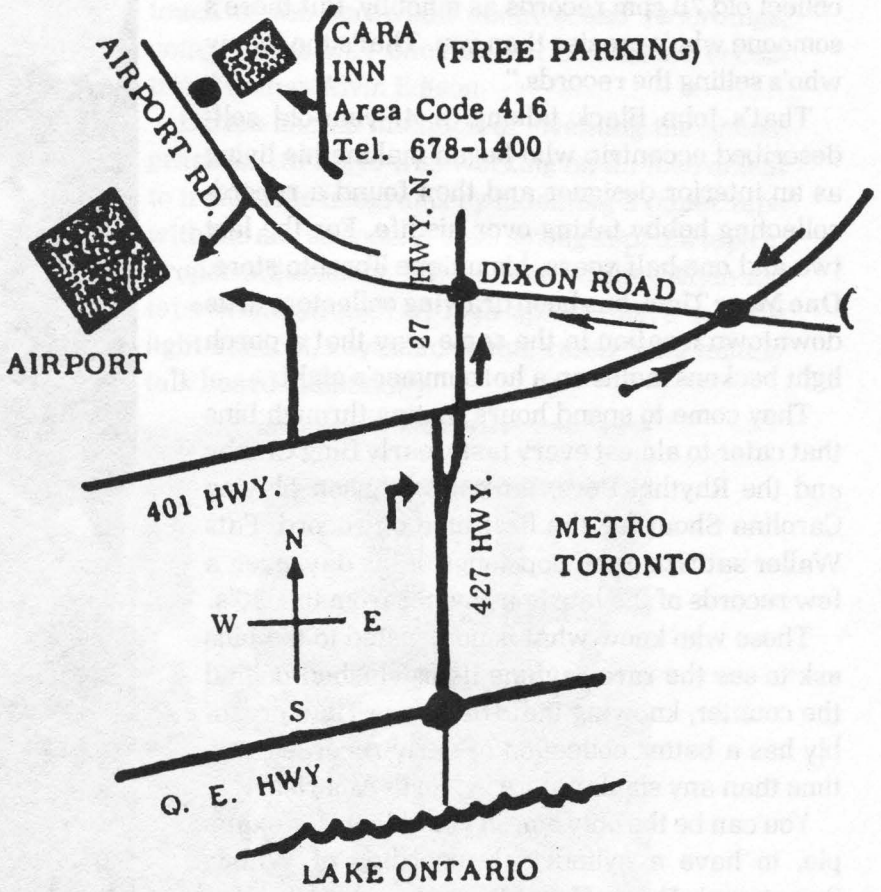
(Friday night, Saturday and Sunday)

WHERE?

THE CARA INN

6275 Airport Road

(Reservations will be accepted at any time)



IT'S OUR TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY!

HEARING GHOSTS FROM THE PAST— ONE MORE TIME

By Jack Hutton

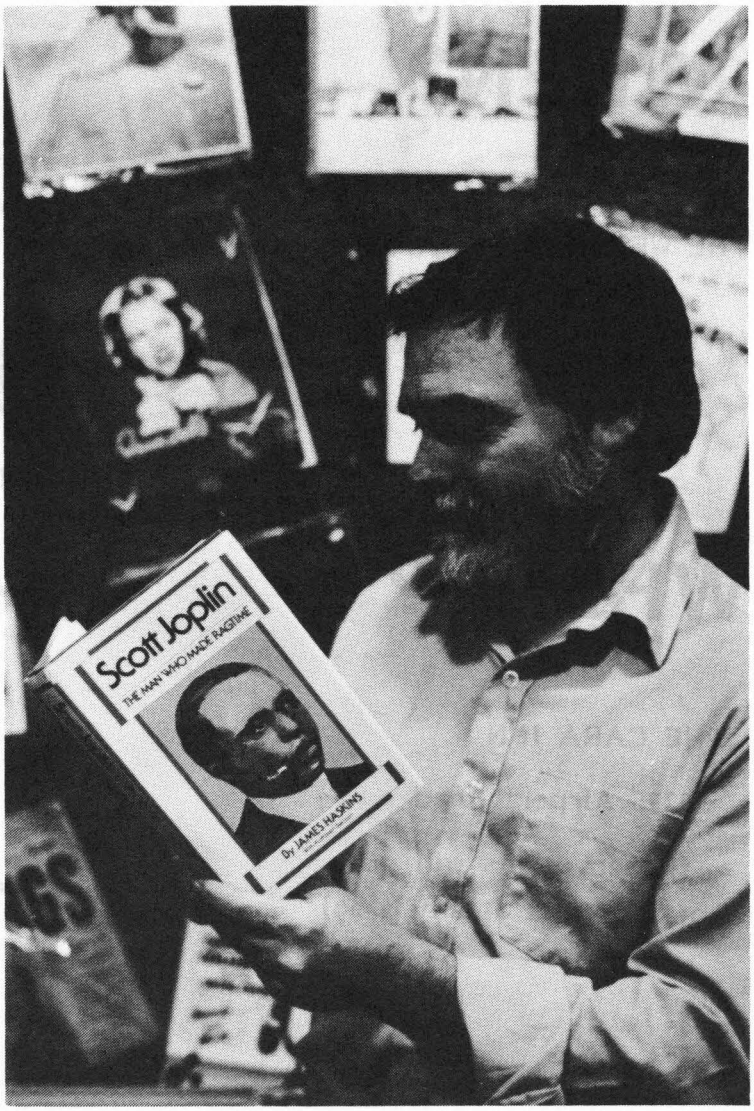
"Eccentric. That's what you are if you decide to collect old 78 rpm records as a hobby. But there's someone who's crazier than you. That's the fellow who's selling the records."

That's John Black talking, a 47-year-old self-described eccentric who began making his living as an interior designer and then found a record-collecting hobby taking over his life. For the last two and one-half years, his unique Toronto store, **One More Time,** has been drawing collectors to its downtown location in the same way that a porch light beckons moths on a hot summer's night.

They come to spend hours sorting through bins that cater to almost every taste: early Bing Crosby and the Rhythm Boys, James P. Johnson playing Carolina Shout for the first time on record, Fats Waller satirizing the pop songs of his day, even a few records of the late Lou Hooper from the '30's.

Those who know what is not trusted to the bins ask to see the rare ragtime items stashed behind the counter, knowing that **One More Time** probably has a better collection of early recorded ragtime than any similar store in North America.

You can be the only one on your block, for example, to have a cylindrical recording of Wilbur Sweatman's **Down Home Rag,** played by the Van Epps Trio. But, as any collector of antique records knows, you'll need the cylindrical curiosity that Thomas Edison created in order to play this record. That will cost you about $275 — or higher. ("The price depends upon whether you want a journeyman machine or a real collector's item," says John.)



John Black, whose passion for the past is shared by his customers (opposite page).

If you want to be more in tune with modern technology, you can purchase a seven-inch recording of Wilbur Sweatman playing his own famous rag on an Emerson Records label, accompanied by the Emerson Strings. (The label doesn't say whether Wilbur performed his celebrated trick of playing three clarinets at once.)

You can walk away with a record for one dollar. For a rarity, the price could be $50 or higher.

On this particular day, I've arranged to spend most of Saturday afternoon browsing through **One More Time's** records — almost every one of them a link with the past — and eavesdropping on the eccentricities of the customers. But even John's description of his clientele didn't prepare me for the matronly lady who wanted four carbon 78 rpm records.

John: "Carbon records? Ah, which artist do you have in mind, ma'am?"

The lady taps her gloves on the counter, almost dislodging from its display a seven-inch recording of **Darkie Tickle** by Hager's Orchestra, recorded on Zon-O-Phone, which I learn later from John was an early pirate label issued circa 1900.

This customer isn't interested in Zon-O-Phone, pirates or anything else historic. "Any records, so long as they are carbon." "Of course, ma'am. Help yourself to the bin where every record is one dollar. If you look for the Victor label, most of those will be the early carbon records."

Several dyed-in-the-wool collectors strain their ears to hear the answer when John asks the inevitable question: "If you don't mind my asking, why carbon records? And why just any record?"

The matron stares at John. "I'm having a dinner party."

The room is suddenly silent.

"I have such a worry about setting hot dishes down on the table, but if I put those old 78's underneath the table cloth there is no worry about damaging the table — provided, of course, that they are carbon."

The half-dozen in the room wait a few discreet moments after the door closes before bursting into laughter. Meanwhile, I have been browsing through **The Fabulous Phonograph** by Ronald Gelett,and realize that there has always been a touch of the screwball about sound recordings, going all the way back to that celebrated eccentric, Thomas Alvin Edison.

Edison had no intention of inventing the phonograph in 1877. He was working on an instrument to transcribe telegrams by indenting a paper tape with the morse code. A steel spring kept the tape in proper adjustment. Edison noticed that when the tape went through at high speed. there was "a light musical, rhythmic sound, resembling human talk heard indistinctly."

Althouth barely in his 30's, Edison was nevertheless financially independent because of his invention of a carbon transmitter for Alexander Graham Bell's year-old telephone. But he was ready at any time to detour wherever his scientific curiosity might take him.

All of which explains why Edison, perhaps feeling slightly ridiculous, shouted the words for Mary Had A Little Lamb into a rudimentary speaker on August 12, 1877. The rest is history because his words came back to him — not like your solid state stereo but enough to excite thousands who wanted a similar experience.

A young German who arrived penniless in New York in 1870 was among the next to make a major impact on the fledgling invention of recording sound. Emile Berliner, self-educated in the basic principles of chemistry and physics, covered a disc of heavy plate glass with lamp black, revolved it on a turntable and recorded with a stylus. The result was "fixed" with varnish and photo-engraved in metal. Presto — the forerunner of today's flat records and the beginning of the end for Edison's quaint cylinders.

Genuine record collectors know, of course, that Edison called his invention a "phonograph" and Berliner's later invention was a "gramophone". Thanks to our sloppy speech, however, we eventually started calling everything a "phonograph", quite contrary to what the two earlier inventors intended.

Reactions to the new-fangled phonograph/gramophone were mixed. German pianist Hans von Bulow recorded a Chopin mazurka, listened to the play-back — and fainted dead away. (Josef Hoffman is credited with being the first classical performer to record, which he did at 12. No one reported him fainting.) Edison, whose fatherly visage stared out from all his cylinders, was in trouble after Berliner's flat records came along. In 1909, he had to shut down his European plants, and he never again exported cylindrical records after World War I.

But if cylinders were on the way out, the recording industry was on the way up. In 1919, nearly 200 manufacturers in the U.S. turned out more than two million phonograph records. Just five years earlier, there had been fewer than 20 manufacturers.

"Why the mail was late"

Mr. Edison made all sound-reproducing instruments possible but he perfected the Edison Phonograph.

In **One More Time,** of course, all this is "old hat" to the purist collectors who find the store a weekend beacon. They know that a walk through the store is a stroll through history. The earliest record in the store (not for sale and, therefore, not on display) is an advertisement for baking soda, made on May 26, 1896. "It's 70 rpm, not 78, but that's no problem for the serious collector whose machine can be adjusted for the many old records that vary from 78," John explains.

The records reveal that the ragtime pianist was a late-comer to the recording studio, even though ragtime itself was a favorite category. "What you find," says John, "is that most ragtime 78's featured banjos or military bands — rarely piano alone."

But the banjo is just fine with Ragtime Society member Wayne Adams who has dropped in this afternoon, just as he does most Saturdays. He's looking at an 11-inch recording of **How do You Do, Miss Ragtime?,** featuring Burt Earle and his Anglo-American Orchestra. The trouble is that the record is slightly warped.

"There are two prices, Wayne." The first price makes Wayne look slightly grim. "But that's based on my taking out the warp. If you take it home and do it yourself, then we've got a different deal." Wayne agrees that he can take out the warp and leaves with his new purchase, perhaps wondering whether the 1982 Ragtime Bash will hear **How Do You Do, Miss Ragtime?** — providing he can get the warp out before then.

Ragtime Society member Wayne Adams looks a bit doubtful about whether he can take the warp out of this old ragtime 78.

John Black sympathizes with his collectors because he recalls getting started in the hobby back in the 1960's. "I started off collecting anything and everything in jazz before I realized there was just too much out there. That's when I decided to specialize in jazz and ragtime up until 1925, or the Acoustic Period (so-called because performers played or sang into a large acoustic horn; microphones appeared later)."

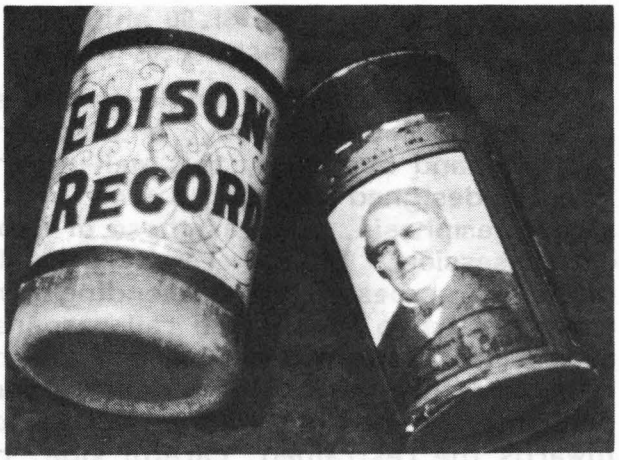
It was during his early collecting days that John first met John Arpin under a table. "He was looking at a box of piano rolls in this antique store, and I told him I'd just gone through it and he was wasting his time. I think he thought I was trying to steer him away from some good finds."

Most collectors have found, however, that John Black usually knows what he's talking about in antique sound. He can prove that stereo phonographs — supposedly a modern development — existed as far back as 1896. And engineers built a quadrophonic four-channel gramphone in 1906. Someday, says John, he'd like to meet David Jasen because he has been keeping a list of new information Jasen might like for the next edition of **Recorded Ragtime, 1897-1958,** which Jasen published in 1973.

How long will **One More Time** and John Black be around?

John looks thoughtful. "We've lasted more than two years, so I guess we'll be around for a while. but I'll tell you one thing. I'd make a lot more money selling shoes!"

FOOTNOTE: One hopeful sign for the antique record collector is that two manufacturers, Dual and Thorens, both have one new hi-fi turntable model that includes 78. Meanwhile, you can contact John Black at **One More Time,** 293 King Street West, Toronto, Ont. (Hours 11 a.m. — 6 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. 416-593-0155).



RECORD REVIEW

by
TEX
WYNDHAM

Ragophile - Collectable Series "The St. Louis Ragtimers"

Selections: Creole Belles, St. Louis Tickle, Pierce City Rag, Sweet Pickles, Coon Hollow Capers, Shake That Thing, Harlem Rag, Pineapple Rag, Kansas City Stomp, King Chanticleer

Personnel: Trebor Tichenor, piano; Al Stricker, banjo; Don Franz, tuba

Available through Trebor Tichenor, 3801 Federer Place, St. Louis, Missouri 63116

For dedicated fans of propulsive, jangling country rags who are willing to endure an acoustically inferior recording of the St. Louis Ragtimers' "first major appearance" on September 30, 1961, this disc, produced for friends of the combo on its 20th anniversary, will be well worth the trouble involved in trying to sort out the trio's somewhat jumbled sound. Though we don't get any of Al's breezy vocals or the jazzy interplay of the lead horns on the team's other LPs, we get the compensation of a program consisting almost exclusively of rocking accompanied piano ragtime, the banjoy chugging percussively, the big-bottomed tuba groaning out an underscore to Treb's boom-chick left hand, and a solid cross-section of classic rags and cakewalks all streamlined into the stomping, down-home-fiddle snap of the treble piano phrases. Most Ragtimer readers are thoroughly familiar with the titles (except for "Pierce City Rag", composed by Tichenor for this concert, which occurred in Pierce City, Missouri, and the excellent and unusual vintage rag "Sweet Pickles", from the pen of Theron C. Bennett, a Pierce City native in whose memory the show took place), which is just as well, because there are spots where your memory will need to supply some melody partially swallowed up by the reverbration and/or banjo plucking. If you are one of the few Society members not already a disciple of the St. Louis Ragtimers, start with one of their previous albums; get used to the outfit; become caught up in their high spirits, informed interpretations, and tight teamwork; and you'll be ready to appreciate this difficult but enjoyable collection.

G.H.B.-154 "The Ragtime Banjo Commission"

Selections: Wild Cherries, Eugenia, Yellow Rose Rag, Weeping Willow, Augustan Club Waltzes, Dill Pickles Rag, Original Rags, Heliotrope Bouquet, Ragging The Scale, A Real Slow Drag, The Entertainer, Banjoreno

Personnel: Jeff Frank, Cal Owen, Maurie Walker, banjos; Bill Clark, tuba

Available @ $8.00, plus $1.00 shipping, from Cal Owen, 111 Bedford Road, Lincoln, Massachusetts 01773

With one banjo for single-string lead, a second for either close harmony or free-flowing countermelody, a third for gentle full-chord rhythm, and a tuba for the left-hand bass line, this well-recorded, nicely-blended chamber ragtime quartet is aptly designed to bring a fresh and musical perspective to rags with a high melodic emphasis, such as those of Scott Joplin, whose works comprise the majority of the session. Charts are exceptionally good, alert to the possibilities of the published scroes -- the descending run that closes "Original Rags" turns up as a tasty two-banjo break, the call-response figures in the trio of "The Entertainer" emerg as a chase between ensemble and one banjo, the tenderness of "Heliotrope Bouquet" is evoked through use of a delicate muted rhythm banjo, and "Weeping Willow" is brilliantly fleshed out with an active, original second banjo part. The disc leans towards the restrained, careful side, righted somewhat Ed Claypoole's light-hearted

"Ragging The Scale" and Ted Snyder's open, swinging "Wild Cherries", but the ponderous, labored "A Real Slow Drag" and the boring ride on the "Augustan Club Waltzes" keep the ship from evenly balancing abandon and precision. Not the sleeve-garter-and-peanuts routine normally conjured up by a "banjo band", the Ragtime Banjoy Commission is an accomplished, sensitive, easy-to-like group with something valid to say to classicist ragtimers.

Stomp Off S.O.S. 1009 "Morten Gunnar Larsen Plays 'Roberto Clemente', 'Poor Jimmy Green' And Other Ragtime/Jazz Compositions"

Selections: Maple Leaf Rag, Tiger Rag, Roberto Clemente, Call Me Shine, Dead Man Blues, Pork And Beans, Florida Rag, Finger-buster, A Tennessee Tantalizer, Medley (I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say/St. Louis Tickle), New Orleans Hop Scop Blues, Poor Jimmy Green

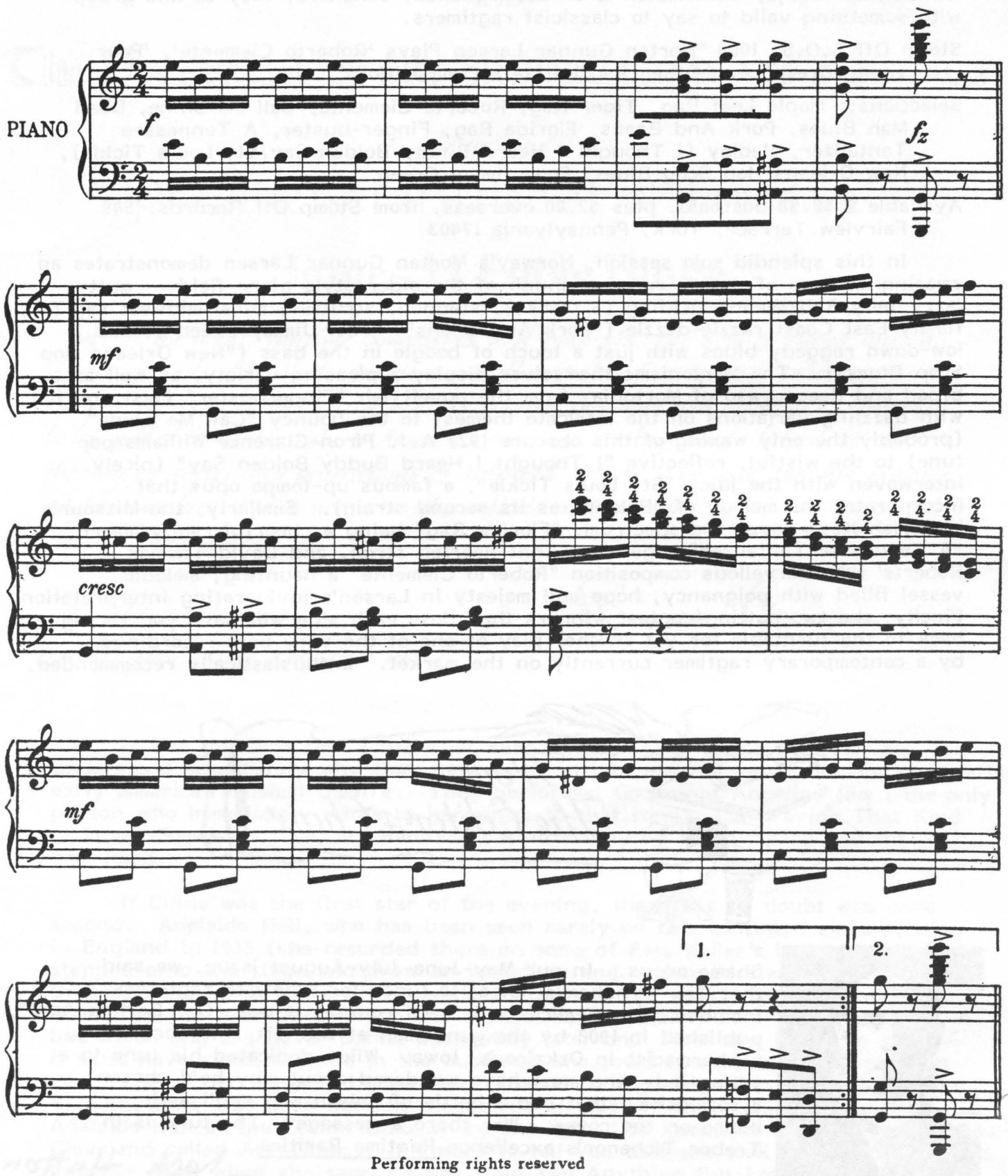
Available @ $8.98 postpaid, plus $2.00 overseas, from Stomp Off Records, 549 Fairview Terrace, York, Pennsylvania 17403

In this splendid solo session, Norway's Morten Gunnar Larsen demonstrates an amazing mastery of a wide-ranging chunk of the older-style piano field -- gutty, jazzy Jelly-Roll-Morton tickling (6 tracks); staunch, strutting rural midwest rag (3); flashy East Coast razzle-dazzle ("Pork And Beans", "Poor Jimmy Green"); and a low-down raggedy blues with just a touch of boogie in the bass ("New Orleans Hop Scop Blues"). The Mortonisms themselves display a pleasing variety, as well as a broad and deep grasp of Mortonia, from the noveltyish "Fingerbuster" (fast and hot, with dazzling variations on the intricate themes) to the bouncy "Call Me Shine" (probably the only waxing of this obscure 1922 A.J. Piron-Clarence Williams pop tune) to the wistful, reflective "I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say" (nicely interwoven with the juicy "St. Louis Tickle", a famous up-tempo opus that incorporates the melody of "Bolden" as its second strain). Similarly, the Missouri Valleyish items cover the spectrum, "Florida Rag" being a cheerful raggy march, "A Tennessee Tantalizer" a gentler, light-hearted stroll, and David Thomas Roberts' 1979 marvellous composition "Roberto Clemente" a haunting, melodic vessel filled with poignancy, hope and majesty in Larsen's invigorating interpretation. Finally, the two cutting-contest winners that close each side will have you racing back to the turntable for yet another play of one of the very best recordings by a contemporary ragtimer currently on the market. Enthusiastically recommended.

Shame on us. In our May-June-July-August issue, we said that Tex Wyndham's list of 10 tunes for novitiate ragtimers included "Car-Barlick-Hud." Of course, it was "Car-Barlick-Acid", published in 1903 by the gentleman at the left, Clarence Wiley, a pharmacist in Oskaloosa, Iowa. Wiley dedicated his tune to a young lady who must have wondered about why he'd chosen a composition that had a bottle of poison and skull and bones on the cover. Was there a message? The tune is in Trebor Tichenor's excellence Ragtime Rarities.

Jack Hutton

"Hungarian Rag"

By JULIUS LENZBERG
Composer of "Haunting Rag" etc.

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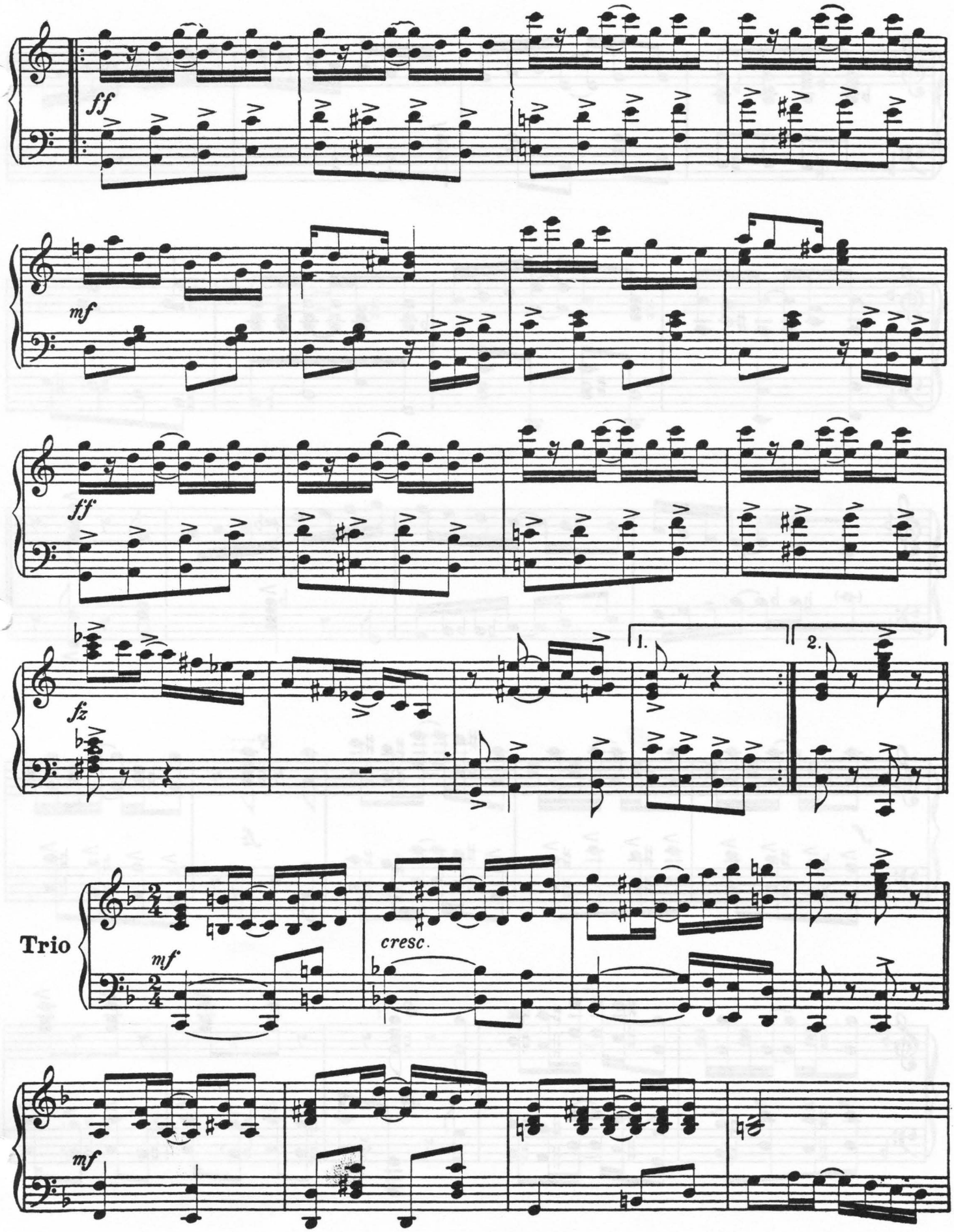
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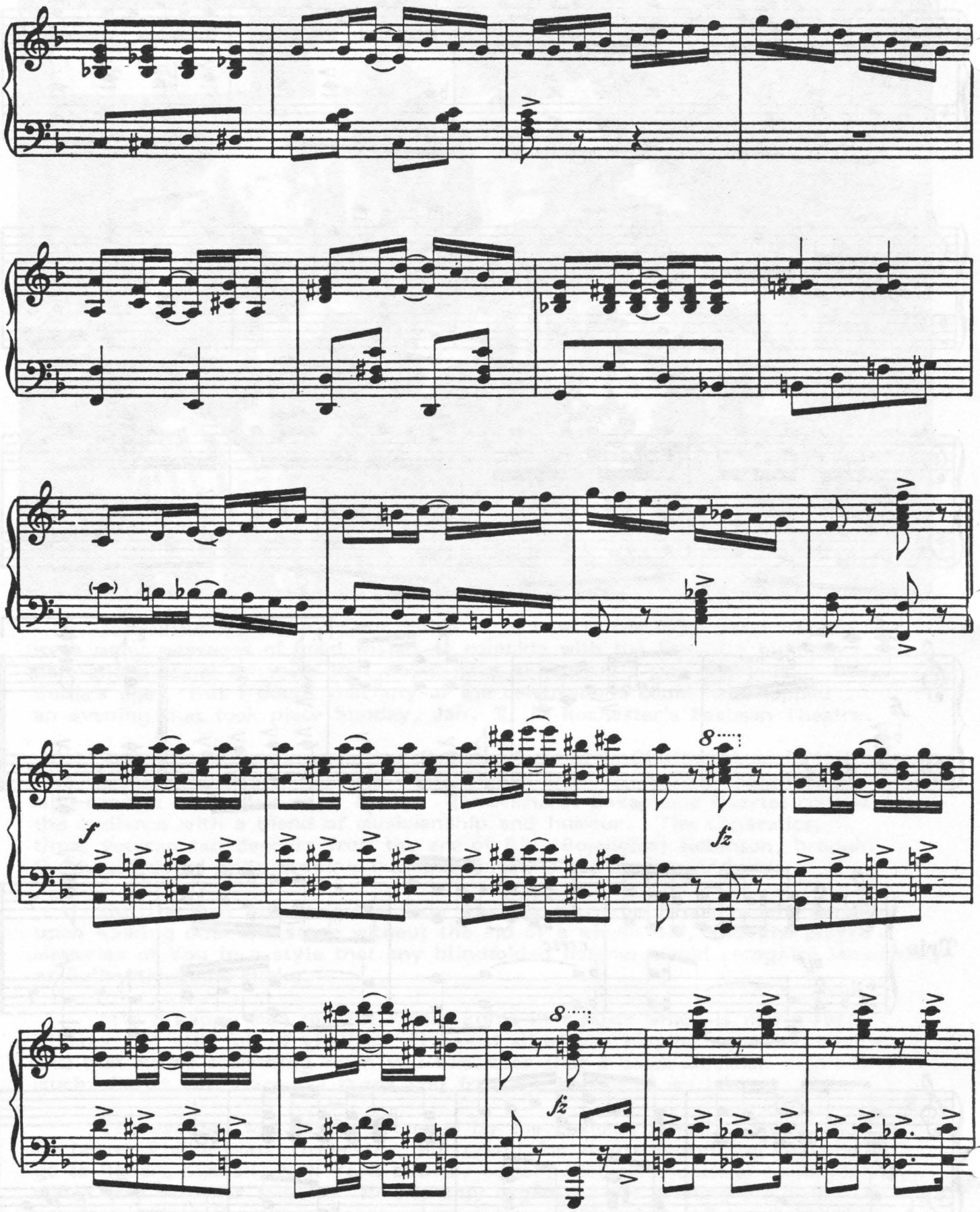
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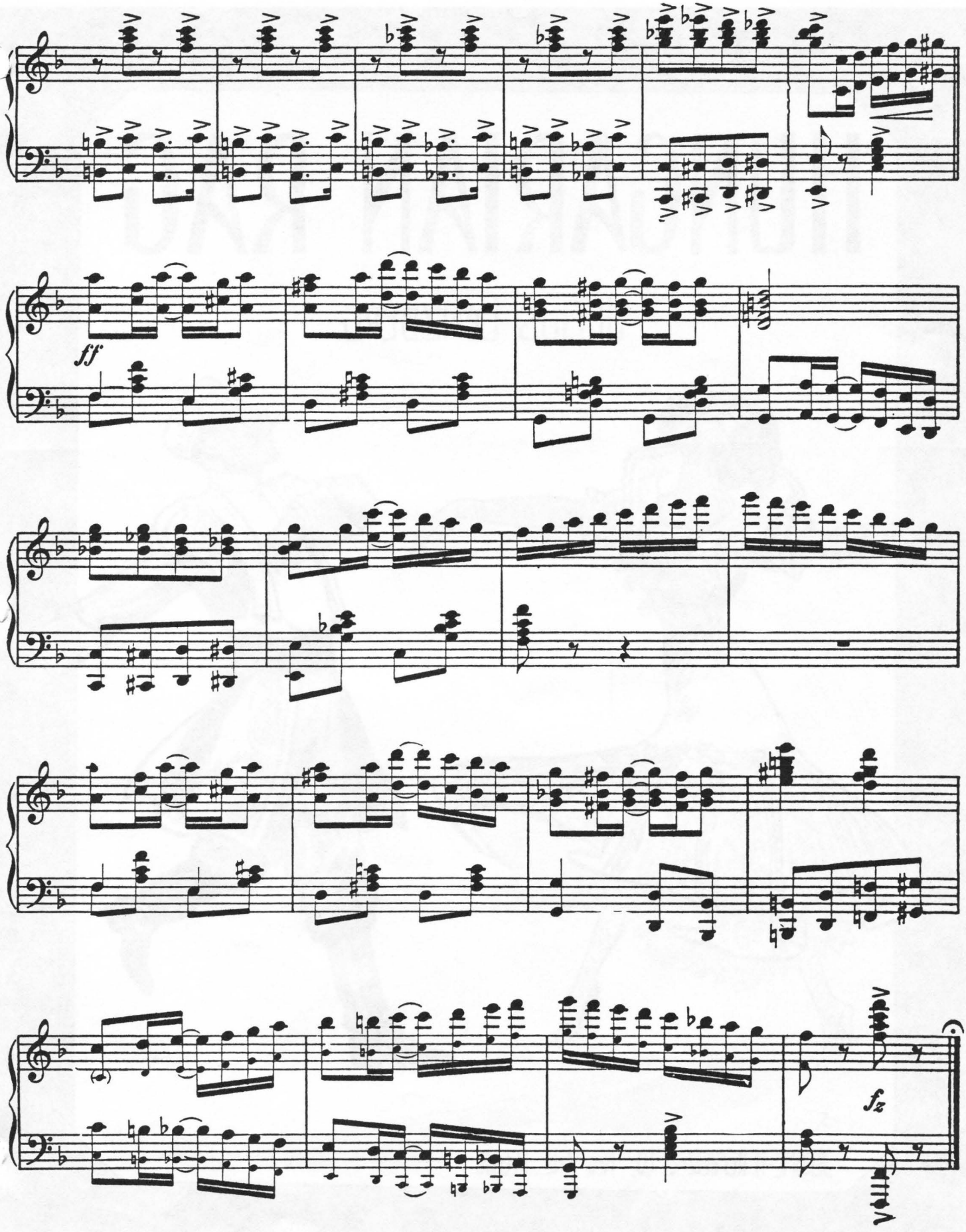
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HUNGARIAN RAG

BY JULIUS LENZBERG

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